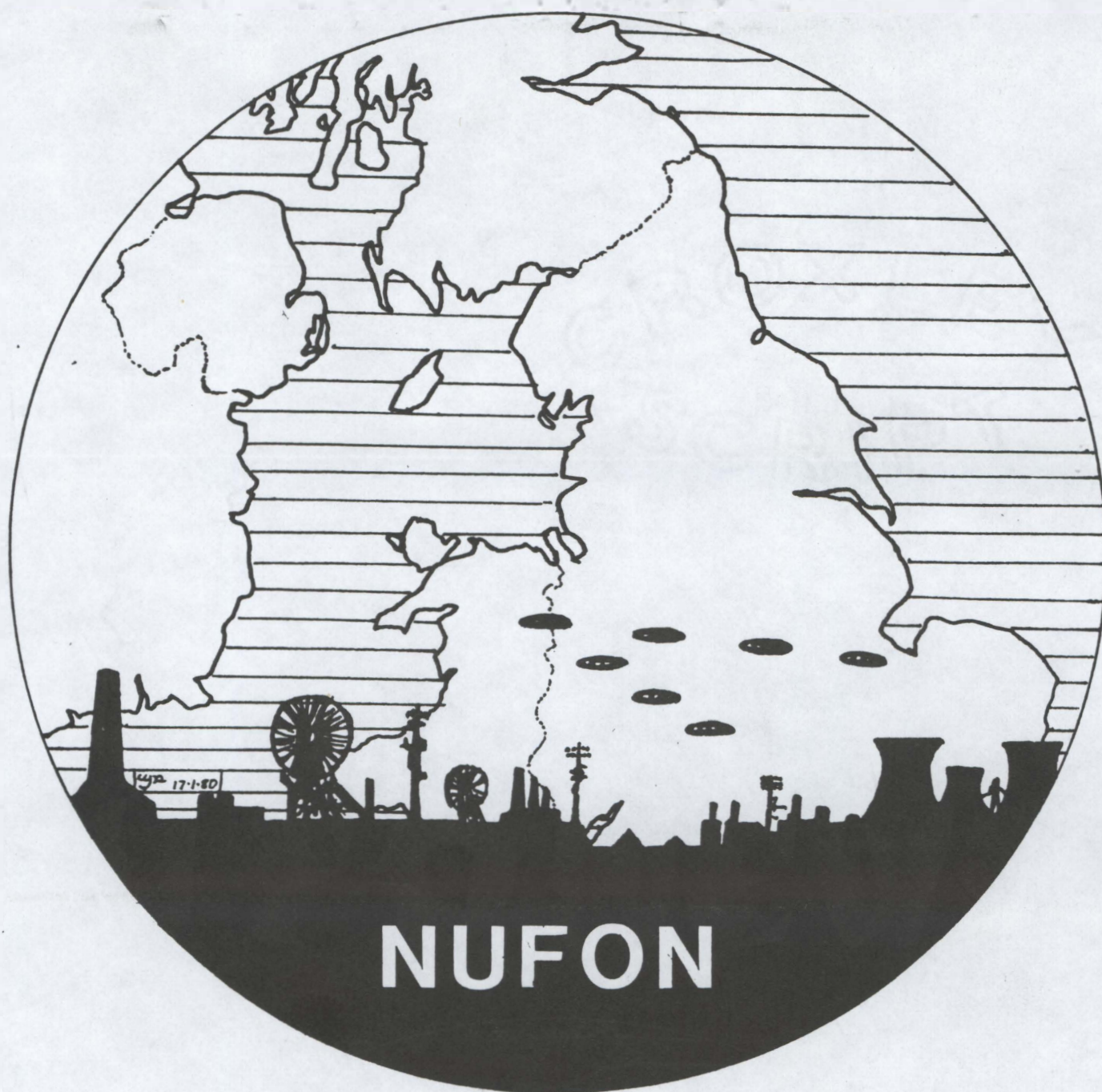


NORTHERN UFO NEWS

70



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Issue 70

 EDITORIAL: "It must make sense - he's an authority" *

Imagine the current meeting of the Blankshire UFO Society, valiently discussing the latest contactee diatribe. Suddenly - Bingo! Down comes a 30 ft saucer and out pops the proverbial little green man. ITV Playhouse on Wednesday, March 5 gave us just that with its witty, little satire "Friends in Space"

To anyone who knew the ins and outs of Ufology it was a brilliant parody on all that we know is true and are prepared to admit about every other Ufologist but for ourselves. "Friends in Space" is presented as an exaggerated but believable UFO society - miniscule in size and run by a dotty electrical wizzard with an ego the size of Mount Everest. Rex G. Thornton, he calls himself (note how the middle initial typifies the early day American UFO leaders) His small gathering of members who attend this 'special' and 'secret' meeting are the typical mixed bag of any group. There is the inquisitive semi-sceptic (played by Eleanor Bron), the brash American weaned on CIA cover-ups and UFO spotting clubs ("I got a badge," he says, "Can you see what it says...." "SPECIAL...UFO..INVESTIGATOR"..... All say 'WOW') "Can you get me one", chirps the wife who munches cornflakes straight from the packet. "I want to suprise my husband" "Gee - well I'll try," comes the inevitable reply, "You're supposed to take a test or something... but I'll try"

The meeting commences as the group swop experiences and sit entranced as the latest and youngest member describes his rather corny CE3 tale. The atmosphere is one of an enchanted sermon. One feels that this man (played by one of the authors in fact - as the rotten acting displayed) was looking for genuine answers and not pseudo-religious drivvel. Yet he had to turn to someone for help - and so who else?

The action has it that Rex G. Thornton has had a CE3 and the alien (a tiny green plastic monstrosity that looked as if it had come out of the cornflakes packet seen earlier) had been hurt in a crash landing. It was, apparantly, just a baby (all say 'Ah') and its parents were coming that night to pick it up (hence the special meeting)

The aliens do come, and we see all the brave Ufological buffoonery degenerate into a madhouse as some group members (excluding Thornton, the young man and the American ... who wants the aliens to go on a world tour promoting Chunkyburgers!) try to foil the landing. They fail, of course, and we are treated to a 50p-budget special effects show that was so bad it was very funny (which was probably the intention) The aliens fly off home and what happens to the idiotic earthmen below is left to imagination.

If one can laugh at the UFO world this was hilarious. The two writers obviously knew something about the subject and they threw in a few cliché phrases from our unique vocabulary for good measure. They sent the business up something wicked... but then we know that although this was a send-up it, sadly, did not need to be too much of one to make its point.

I watched it alongside several people disinterested in UFOs, and a typical remark was "Look out - you're going to end up like that" By the end of the 60 minutes only I was left. The rest had given up and gone to bed, muttering something about TV licence fees and crazy, stupid rubbish. I could not help mirroring that reflection inwards to the real UFO scene.

As a final point - although I am sure the authors meant nothing by it -- I did notice that 2 of the 5 group members had the same surname as prominent UK Ufologists (names are withheld to protect their sanity in case they missed it) As for the name Rex G. Thornton chose to give the baby alien (NIGEL) well I expect someone over in Scunthorpe is turning into a little green man right now!

* The title is a paraphrased quote from "Friends in Space"

NB Note that at this moment there are still delays in the move to the new address (on cover), but this should apply from APRIL 1st. Until then the Irlam address should be used. This has again neccessitated an emergency issue but the APRIL Northern UFOLOGY should - I hope - be back to normal size and format. Apologies for the inconvenience.

NUFON MEETING Saturday APRIL 19 1980 1pm to 5.30 pm

NB

A meeting (from 1 - 2.30) followed by a lecture programme cum discussion session has been organised for the above date, and will be hosted by MIGAP (Merseyside Investigation Group on Aerial Phenomena) FULL DETAILS OVER THE PAGE (MIGAP: St Helens 28705 (TEL))

NUFON MEETING Cont...

Venue: YMCA (Room 1 - 1st floor) Mount Pleasant, LIVERPOOL

This is right in the city centre opposite the STUDIO 1 and 2 cinemas and within 5 minutes walk of LIME STREET (main line) railway station and Bolton Street (cross-country) bus station. A Multi-story car park is directly opposite Lime Street station. Many eating places are virtually next door (including a Wimpy and Italian and Greek restaurants). One walks down Lime Street and turns up Mount Pleasant opposite Lewis' store.

The meeting will discuss HQ development (eg the copier), a plan for a NUFON research file form and any other matters. Lecture/Discussions are planned to be on the Feb 1979 multi-witness CE case from the West Coast (with MOD cover up involvement) and the Gaynor Sunderland CE3 and CE4 experiences from Clwyd. Also we hope NUFOIS will be presenting a paper on research into various kinds of detection equipment. See you there.

NEWS ROUND-UP

:: March 8 was to see the first meeting of the Scottish UFO Network; which is being formed in liaison with NUFON. Full details of specific proposals will be available for the April 19 meeting when coordination will be considered.

:: Another new group to record is Lincolnshire UFO Research (which is part of the Lincolnshire Earth Mysteries Group - also covering leylines, psi etc. LUFOR will be associating with NUFON and publishing an earth mysteries journal (to include UFOs). This is available at £2.00 subscription. Contact address is:-

Andrew Pickering: 16 Packhorse Lane, Swineshead, Boston, Lincs Tel: 0205 - 82540

:: Yet another Lincolnshire group is GUFORT (Grimsby UFO Research Team); which investigates reports locally but is coordinated from LONDON (!) Address :- John Hyne: 11 Drake Court; Sootts Rd; Shepherds Bush; LONDON W12 8HG

:: Fancy an earth mysteries weekend on the North Yorks Moors? The Northern Earth Mysteries Group are organising what they call a MOOT (walks, visits to ancient sites etc). Cost will be £3, plus food, and details are available from:-

Philip Heselton, 61 Clumber St, Hull HU5 3RH (Write soon; its April 11th to 13th)

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FUNNY KIND

The Sun newspaper of February 28 published a selection of letters on amusing UFO experiences. What about the man in Snodland (its supposed to be a place!) who fell off his bike when a UFO flew by (it turned out to be a streetlight); or the UFO with legs that displayed falling-leaf motion to the lady in London (that was an adventurous spider on her spectacle lenses!) Then there was the poor fellow in Madeley who gazed at his girlfriend and muttered those immortal lines "Your eyes are like the stars above" - but the stars above turned out to be lights on a UFO which swooped down! The lovers fled and never met again! There were a couple of serious items too; so I suggest local investigators reading this arm themselves with the local telephone directory and try to trace these witnesses. The effort could very well be worthwhile. Mrs M May of Manningtree, Essex had a scary CE1 when a UFO lightbeam drained her car of oil. B.D. Thiel (should not be too hard to trace) of Enfield, Middlesex says that he and 7 others saw a UFO over a US Air force base in Germany which was tracked on radar and filmed (and covered up) by the authorities! Someone should find Mr Thiel fast!! (or the MIBs might get there first) For the record the lady whose lover fled was Mrs B. James of Madeley, Shropshire.

REVIEW: "Anatomy of a Wave"

Stars & Rumours of Stars by Kevin & Sue McClure 36pp booklet £1

When one thinks of historical UFO research there is a tendency to be restricted to 1947 as an arbitrary starting point. Then, perhaps, one might recall the great airship waves of 1896-97 and so on (which have received some attention). In this meticulously researched booklet the authors show that UFO waves of other descriptions did occur in such recesses of the hazy past.

Kevin McClure is not simply a ufologist (member of UAPROL in Leicester, BUFORA RI and UFOIN investigator) - but he is also on the special sub-committee appointed by the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) to examine the UFO-Psychic link. As one might expect with such a background this publication covers more than just UFOs.

REVIEW Cont..

What it is, in fact, is a clinical appraisal of what is historically termed the Welsh religious revival of 1905. In fact, as the McClures show, this was in very many senses a wave of paranormal phenomena. Although incidents such as visions of Christ and Satan, clairvoyance (and even an MIB experience!) are involved, most of the text concerns the mystery of the Egryn lights.

Egryn is a small mid-Wales village and home of Mary Jones, a young farmers wife and one of the leaders of the revival. Following personal experiences and conversion in late 1904 she turned thousands of people to Christianity. The rumour was that mystery lights (globes, rainbows etc) followed her about the countryside, and this has been compared by several researchers to religious orientated contactee experiences (eg Fatima, Portugal, 1917 when tens of thousands saw a religiously interpreted UFO event) Yet whether such phenomena are UFOs or not is a moot point. On the basis of description alone they must be. However, the relationship with the euphoria of the revival and Mary Jones herself is inescapable. One cannot lightly dismiss the link between UFOs and other paranormal phenomena.

The authors do a remarkable job in collating all the source material together, adding to impressive testimony for something peculiar. Social reactions, explanations and contemporary investigations (including what seems the worlds first skywatch complete with electromagnetic detectors!) are all referenced. Also within is all the necessary background on the region and revival. A classic case of investigating the seemingly uninvestigatable, and a perfect illustration of what any researcher can do with almost no equipment or expenditure (save time and effort) Highly recommended.

Available from the McClures at: 8 Scotland Rd, Little Bowden, Mkt Harborough, Leics.

CONSTRUCTIONS OF REALITY by Nigel Watson of SUFORS

"The pretty nurse is selling poppies from a tray. And though she feels as if she's in a play she is anyway." Lyric from 'Penny Lane' by Lennon & McCartney

A most important article on Ufology is that by John Harney in MUFOB Vol 5 No 3 ("UFO Reports: A need for a rational approach") It is important because he points out that Ufologists are part of the phenomenon themselves - ie the assumptions and bias of UFO researchers distorts our perception of the phenomenon. This is a danger of any kind of research, but Ufology is more prone to distortion due to its creation of ETH, paranormal and psychological theories.

Causal explanations of Ufology usually isolate certain elements of a report. For instance ETH orientated investigators look for landing traces and other kinds of objective evidence (and ETH investigators tend to ignore cases which do not have this kind of evidence) "New Ufologists" look for a whole variety of psychological and sociological aspects of the UFO percipient and may overlook objective data. At the same time major UFO publications tend to refrain from publishing such analyses.

However, UFO percipients should be considered on a wider sociological basis. Depending upon the bias of the Ufologist the percipient is defined and labelled in a certain manner. He might then even take on this given role. Certainly people like Betty Hill and Joyce Bowles have thrown themselves into a Ufological role and media attention in particular can make UFO percipients minor celebrities. Through our own labelling process we create people who identify themselves (and are identified) with the archetypal 'UFO Percipient'.

Most percipients are not affected in this way, but there are examples of those who have suffered because of the process. (1) Others might play-act their given role by claiming ever more bizarre encounters and churning out UFO philosophies. George Adamski is a marvellous example of a percipient playing his role to the full.

Harney contended that, "the behaviour of witnesses and investigators tends to fall into definite patterns and it thus becomes possible to make predictions about certain aspects of future UFO events." (2) In this context we must view witnesses, investigators and researchers as social actors who are playing out their assumed and given roles. These interactive processes create the muddled thinking of Ufologists, who presume that there must be a single causal answer to the problem (be that ETH or paranormal or whatever) Yet we should be aware of the following points when considering Ufological theories:

- a) INVESTIGATOR BIAS: Are the cases investigated by an investigator representative?
Which particular aspects of the encounter are examined?
- b) ROLE OF THE PERCIPIENT: Does labelling, the media or the investigator create a role?

CONSTRUCTIONS OF REALITY Cont...

c) IMPACT: When taking the above into consideration how do various theories, reports etc stand up to careful examination?

To conclude it is my contention that we have to look at the social context of Ufology and the processes of social interaction if we are to have a better understanding of the theories so loved and hated by Ufologists. © N.Watson 1980

- 1) "UFO Witnesses: Public Property," Tokarz, H MUFOB New Series 11, 1978
- 2) "UFO Reports: Notes on a need for a rational approach" Harney, J MUFOB Summer 1978

(Nigel is currently finalising a book which contains 'Portraits of Alien Encounters' and examines a number of recent UK CE4 cases from a sociological viewpoint...EDITOR)

INVESTIGATIONS

LOW DEFINITION PHENOMENA (Ref: Date: Time: Location: Notes: Inv. Level: Eval:)

78-260	Jan 26	07.20	Brierfield, Lancs	E (Cutting)	Insuff Data
(White star stationary then moved off with flashing LITS. Humming sound)					
79-113	Sep 12	20.30	Whiston, Msyside	C (MIGAP)	Poss: Helicopt
(R & G LITS with two W searchlights, going round and 'whirring'. Seen by 3 witnesses. move about over open land for 5 mins... sounds like a helicopter but none traced)					
79-115	Nov 7	03.45	Liverpool, Msyside	C (MIGAP)	Insuff Data
(Man getting up for work saw Or LITS with black line to R LITS. Hovered then moved on)					
79-117	Dec 19	19.15	St Helens, Msyside	C (MIGAP)	Insuff Data
(MIGAP member on way to meeting saw two W LITS converge as one then go out after 3 min)					

* * * * *

MEDIUM DEFINITION PHENOMENA

77-322	Jun 21	09.30	Salford, Gtr Manchester	E (Cutting)	Insuff Data
Man and woman on motorcycle pursued for several miles by silver cigar, Hovered above when they stopped. Seen by independant witnesses in Bunley.					
78-261	Sep 8	19.00	Kidderminster, Worcs	A (UFOSIS)	Insect swarm?
Man and woman observed grey/black cloud approach electricity pylons and hover above. Moved about over these for 15 mins plus changing shape to mesh, zeppelin and then climbing, breaking into 3 portions which dissipated in air. Could be birds, insects or an electrical atmospheric phenomenon of some kind.					
79-111	Aug 25	00.05	Flint, Clwyd	C (PARASEARCH)	Insuff Data
16 yr old babysitting in remote farmhouse heard car engine (but none there) then saw dark oval mass with 2 Green and 1 red LITS below rise vertically and then move off horizontal. Roaring engine noise like jet aircraft, as it moved away. Poss Harrier jet					
8001	Jan 16	17.50	Jedburgh, Borders, Scotland	D (BUFORG)	Insuff Data
Red cluster of lights plus windows seen by farmers and inhabitants of this area at this time and on next two nights. One case is a CEL, and BUFORG are following this up.					

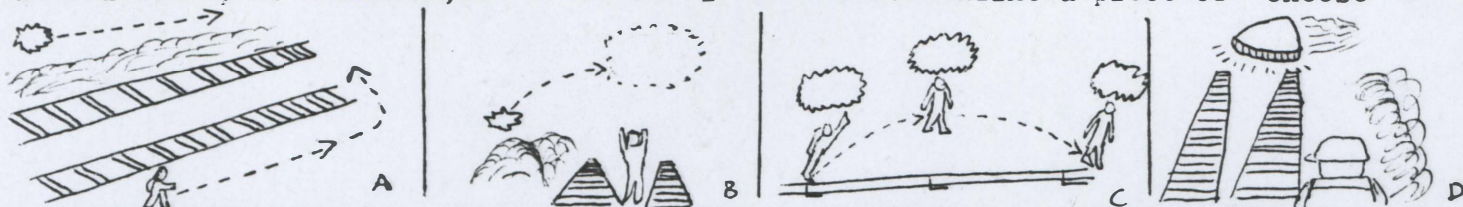
UFOs NOT ON STRIKE AT STEEL WORKS INST/P Case 79-116 Level E SUFORS

Whilst Normanby Park Steel Works, Scunthorpe, Humberside is presently shut down due to the BSC strike the UFOs are there in force. According to Steel News Mandy Mason, a clerk has taken a series of night shots of the brightly lit complex since November 1979 and whilst she sees nothing her camera shows a white cigar like light over various sites. BSC and Mandy are 'amazed' but SUFORS agree with RAF Cranwell (who examined the print) that they are probably caused by a lens flare (an internal reflection within the camera of the bright lights that illuminate the plant) .

UFO INSTILLED LEVITATION? CEL Physio Case 7958 Level B G & M Birdsall

On February 12 1979 Mr A, a British Rail employee, caught a train to Headingley, nr Leeds, West Yorkshire. It was 18.00 and he got off to walk the 1 mile along the track to his home. Across the adjacent track he observed a green glow through some leafless bushes. He stopped and noted it was stationary. As he moved off it kept pace with him looking very eerie in the snow laden fields. Unfortunately the Harrogate-Leeds train approached and he had to cross the tracks and thus come within a few feet of the still persuant mass of green. As the train passed the mass rose until it was just a few feet

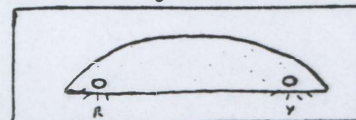
above his head and then moved to come directly over him. Not knowing what it might be he reached up to touch it, but could not. It looked not unlike a piece of 'cheese' -



irregular sides and several feet across. Then, suddenly, he was lifted vertically into the air six or seven feet and deposited on the track 15 feet or so in the direction (C) he was headed. Terrified and bemused he took some seconds to look back and saw an oval object (seemingly larger) with a green glow below and a vapour behind it. He rushed home and told nobody (not even his wife) but never walked along the track again. (D)

ANOTHER PSYCHIC WITNESS CEL An, Psycho Case 79-112 Level A Stephen Banks PARASEARCH

The witness is 22 yrs old and has had several 'psychic' experiences (seeing forms and shapes in bedroom etc) He is also a firm UFO believer with a semi-religious viewpoint. Several low definition UFO sightings are noted, but all seem potentially identifiable. On September 9 1979 at 23.45 whilst returning from his girlfriends in Stafford, Staffs he observed an orange oval with 2 LITS inside (one red, one yellow). This was stationary at first but moved away from E to N taking 2-3 mins before fading. As it passed overhead an alsation-cross dog by him started to bark fiercely and continued until the object had gone. Witness felt a peculiar attraction and sense of benevolence about the object. The investigators speculate on a psychological solution to this case. A BAC 1-11 aircraft was in the area at the time heading N. It is possible his beliefs led to a misinterpretation of this. Based on a UFOIN report 21pp M, P, S



CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH LIGHTBEAM CEL An, Psycho Case 79-114 Level A MUFORA

Keith Beaver lives in Coronation St, Salford (not the Coronation Street, Salford!!) On September 27 1979 his 10 yr old daughter disturbed him from watching TV (it was 20.20) to say the yard was on fire. He went out and saw it all lit up by a blinding, flicking light. He took his dog out with him and it ran over into the corner of the yard and cowered. In the sky above, approaching from the NW, was a white oval that flashed on and off. When overhead it was similar in size to a 5p piece at arms length. Around it was a ring of 30 or so very bright lights flashing constantly. It hovered more or less overhead and spun round and swayed from side to side (possibly an optical effect of the light). It then dropped down, growing in size and emitting a vapour, before stopping again. Some neighbours were called and asked "What is it?" One said it was an aircraft on fire. Keith said he is seldom frightened but he was really scared by this. It dimmed and the lights (which had disappeared whilst it had stopped for several minutes) came back on. It moved off SSE towards Stockport but hovered twice more en route. At the final hovering (around 20.45) an aircraft flew over. As it got close to the object it went dim, but shone out again after the aircraft had passed. After hovering for 2 more minutes it became very bright and there was a big flash of light and it vanished completely.



Keith called the police who checked it out and put him onto Jenny Randles who was able to interview him by phone that night. A few days later Rosalind & Peter Warrington visited the site and conducted interviews. Several neighbours claimed to have seen something and one person, close by, says he saw the object project a narrow beam of light into the garden of Keith Beaver. Manchester Airport were contacted that same night. They had had several reports from Salford but said, "It was nothing to do with us. I haven't a clue what it was. It's been passed to the military. I'll let them sort it out - if they can!" The aircraft was confirmed as a lightplane inbound from Blackpool. He made no UFO report. In many senses it sounds like an aircraft with strobe lights but Ringway claimed "We had nothing on radar except the aircraft from Blackpool". Based on a detailed UFOIN report on the case.

CASES 12 Insuff Data 8; Lens Flare 1; Helicopter 1; insects 1; UFO 1 (8.5%)
Thanks to: BUFORG, MIGAP, MUFORA, NLUFOIG, PARASEARCH, SUPORS, UFOSIS, Graham & Mark Birdsall and Nigel Watson.